

MECKLENBURG - UNION TECHNICAL COORDINATING COMMITTEE
Summary Meeting Minutes
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Government Center
Room 280
January 8, 2009

Voting Members: Wayne Herron-Chairman (Monroe), Bill Coxe-Vice-chair (Huntersville), Norm Steinman – alt. for Danny Pleasant (CDOT), Jim Keenan (E&PM), Leslie Rhodes (LUESA-Air Quality), David McDonald (MTC), Louis Mitchell – alt. for Barry Moose (NCDOT-Division 10), Jack Flaherty (NCDOT-PTD), Andrew Grant (Cornelius), Scott Kaufhold (Indian Trail), Bill Sherrill (Matthews), Lee Bailey (Mint Hill), Kevin Icard (Pineville), Shannon Martel - alt. for Brian Matthews, (Stallings), Greg Mahar (Waxhaw), Kim Woods (Weddington), Amy Helms (Union County)

Staff: Robert Cook (MUMPO), Stuart Basham (MUMPO), Crissy Huffstickler (CMPD), Tim Gibbs (CDOT), Andy Grzymiski (CDOT), Jim Kimbler (CDOT), Loretta Barren (FHWA), Eddie Dancausse (FHWA), Hemal Shah (Cornelius), Zac Gordon (Huntersville), Olaf Kinard (CATS), Craig Thomas (Indian Trail), Mary Jo Gollnitz (Marvin), Anna Whalen (Marvin), C.J. O’Neill (Matthews), Jim Loyd (Monroe), Julie Clark (Meck Park & Recreation), Bjorn Hansen (Centralina COG), Dennis LaCaria (CMS), Jennifer Harris – via phone (NCTA)

Guests: Steve Blakley (Kimley-Horn), Padam Singh (HNTB), Mike Schrutrum, Bill Latta

Mr. Herron opened the meeting at 10:00 AM.

1. Election of Officers

Chairman

Mr. Herron requested nominations for TCC chairman for 2009. Bill Coxe nominated Mr. Herron for TCC chairman and Andrew Grant seconded the nomination. David McDonald moved that nominations for chairman be closed and all agreed. Upon being put to a vote, Mr. Herron was unanimously elected TCC chairman for 2009.

Vice-Chairman

Mr. Herron requested nominations for TCC vice-chairman. Mr. Grant nominated Mr. Coxe for vice-chairman and Shannon Martel seconded the nomination. Mr. McDonald moved that nominations for chairman be closed and all agreed. Upon being put to a vote, Mr. Coxe was unanimously elected TCC vice-chairman for 2009.

2. Consideration of November 2008 Minutes

Presenter: Wayne Herron

Summary/Requested Action:

Mr. Cook noted that he had been contacted about a spelling error in a name and that the change had been made. Jim Keenan made a motion to approve the minutes. Mr. Coxe seconded the motion. The November 2008 minutes were approved unanimously.

3. Safe Routes to School & Bike/Ped Grant Endorsements

Presenter: Robert Cook

Summary/Requested Action:

The following agencies requested that the TCC recommend to the MPO that their Safe Routes to School proposals be endorsed:

Town of Huntersville
Mecklenburg County
Town of Mint Hill

Mr. Cook briefly reviewed each proposal and requested that the TCC endorse them individually or as a group.

Motion:

Mr. Coxe made a motion to recommend all proposals to the MPO for endorsement. Greg Mahar seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

4. I-485 Designation

Presenter: Robert Cook

Summary/Requested Action:

Mr. Cook stated that federal rules require that MPOs endorse adding portions of roadways to the Interstate system before the roadway is specifically designated as an interstate. In this case, the request relates to the portion of I-485 from I-85 west of Charlotte to I-77 north of Charlotte.

Motion:

Mr. McDonald made a motion to recommend to the MPO that it endorse the portion of I-485 from I-85 west of Charlotte to I-77 north of Charlotte being added to the Interstate system. Mr. Mahar seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

5. Draft Public Involvement Plan Revision (PIP)

Presenter: Robert Cook

Summary / FYI:

Mr. Cook stated that the action request was for the TCC to recommend to the MPO that it permit the release of the draft PIP for public review. He then reviewed the proposed changes to the document by noting that the reason for the proposed revisions related to changes resulting from the adoption of SAFETEA-LU. Mr. Cook also noted that there are recommendations for changes in the PIP's section devoted to how Thoroughfare Plan amendments are handled. The most significant recommendation is to delete a provision permitting significant changes to the Thoroughfare Plan (e.g. adding an interchange to a freeway) without individual property owners being notified. Mr. Cook requested comments from the TCC on the draft PIP.

Motion:

Jonathan Parker made a motion to recommend to the MPO that it release the draft PIP for public review. Mr. Coxe seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

6. Draft 2011-2017 Candidate Project List (CPL)

Presenter: Robert Cook

Summary / FYI:

Mr. Cook noted that this issue had been discussed in-depth at three Transportation Staff meetings and stated he was confident it represented the TCC's wishes. He also stated that this effort was largely one to "clean up" the CPL to ensure that it truly represented the MPO's top priorities for project implementation since it is recognized that current fiscal and economic conditions make it unlikely that new projects will be funded in the 2011-2017 TIP. Mr. Cook then went through the draft CPL and discussed the proposed changes, including projects to be added or dropped and those with project limit and/or description changes.

The following changes were recommended:

1. Add the TIP number to project #21 on the Roadway list (I-77)
2. Add "Jetton Park" to the description of #5 on the Bicycle/Pedestrian list
3. Clarify the language of the project being requested in the Multi-Modal Planning & Environmental Studies category

Motion:

Mr. Coxe made a motion to recommend to the MPO that it release the draft 2011-2017 CPL for public review with the above three changes being included. Mr. Grant seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

7. Draft FY 2010 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

Presenter: Robert Cook

Summary / FYI:

Mr. Cook stated that the UPWP is adopted annually by the MPO and represents the work staff believes necessary to carry out the metropolitan planning process during the fiscal year. The allocations were then reviewed. Planning (PL) funds are the most significant amount of money allocated to the MPO and the allocation for FY 2010 is \$725,075, a 10% decrease from the current fiscal year due to a rescission that occurred in May 2008. Mr. Cook added that MUMPO's PL allocation is supplemented by STP-DA funds allocated in the TIP (U-9999C), and that the amount for FY 2010 is \$480,000. He added that staff is now attempting to determine if the funds may be subject to a rescission. The other funding source is Section 5303 funds, but the exact amount was not known at the time of the meeting. An estimated amount of \$341,266 was presented to the TCC. This amount assumes a 10% reduction from the FY 09 amount.

Local transportation planning efforts being considered for inclusion in the UPWP were reviewed. The jurisdictions requesting funds were: Davidson (\$25,000); Huntersville (\$18,500); Mint Hill (\$37,500). More information will be provided at the February TCC meeting or at Transportation Staff meetings.

Motion:

Mr. McDonald made a motion to recommend to the MPO that it release the draft FY 2010 UPWP for public review. Norm Steinman seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

8. Congestion Mitigation & Air Quality (CMAQ) Issues

a. TIP Amendment: C-4965B Andrew Grant, Cornelius

Summary / FYI:

Mr. Grant stated that this project was funded as a part of the 2004 Call for Projects and was programmed for implementation in 2011. He stated that Cornelius was interested in implementing the project earlier, thus the reason for the TIP amendment; however, if the project is eligible for fast tracking, the Town would like to reserve the right to pursue that approach.

Motion:

Mr. Coxe made a motion to recommend to the MPO that it amend the TIP as requested. He added that the motion includes an endorsement of fast tracking if the project is eligible. Mr. Parker seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

b. TIP Amendment: C-4953 David McDonald, CATS

Summary / FYI:

Mr. McDonald informed the TCC that this project was funded during the 2004 Call for Projects and involved the provision of express bus service from uptown Charlotte to Waxhaw. The requested TIP amendment is to change the scope of the project to permit service to Waxhaw in the form of vanpools and to a transportation demand program for the promotion of the Clean Air Works initiative. The reason for the change to a vanpool program is the lack of buses to operate the service and difficulties for the local communities to provide the required match.

Motion:

Mr. Coxe made a motion to recommend to the MPO that it amend the TIP as requested. Jack Flaherty seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

c. Project Fast Tracking Endorsement: C-4955 Andy Grzynski, CDOT

Summary / FYI:

Mr. Grzynski stated that this project was funded during the 2004 Call for Projects, and that fast tracking was being pursued because that option eliminates the need for the required local match.

Motion:

Mr. McDonald made a motion to recommend to the MPO that it endorse the project for fast tracking. Mr. Coxe seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

d. 2008 Project Proposals Robert Cook

Summary / FYI:

Mr. Cook reviewed the projects that had been submitted for consideration:

1. Carolinas Clean Air Coalition
 - a. Mecklenburg-Union Clean School Bus Initiative
2. CATS
 - a. Providence Road Signal Priority
 - b. Replacement buses project
3. CDOT
 - a. Sugar Creek Road & Rumble Road Turn Lanes
 - b. Haburn Forest Connectivity
4. Town of Cornelius
 - a. Knox Road Realignment
 - b. Gem Street Extension
 - c. Liverpool Parkway Roundabout
(4b and 4c were not specifically mentioned at the meeting, but were submitted on time.)
5. Mecklenburg County Air Quality
 - a. Clean Air Works!
 - b. GRADE-Grants to Reduce Aging Diesel Engines
6. Mecklenburg County Park & Recreation
 - a. McAlpine Creek Greenway-connection to Ballantyne Corporate Park

- b. Mallard Creek Greenway-connection to CATS's Mallard Creek park & ride lot
- 7. Town of Mint Hill
 - a. Crestview Drive Connection

Mr. Cook stated that the projects will be analyzed by the TCC's CMAQ Project Review subcommittee. He also noted that the sponsors of the following projects had requested that their projects be considered for fast tracking:

1. Mecklenburg-Union Clean School Bus Initiative
2. Clean Air Works!
3. GRADE-Grants to Reduce Aging Diesel Engines

Mr. Grzymyski noted that CDOT had requested a project for fast tracking that was not mentioned: US 521/Ballantyne Commons Parkway intersection improvements. After considerable discussion, it was decided that this project would be considered with the three other projects.

Motion:

Mr. McDonald made a motion to consider the US 521/Ballantyne Commons Parkway project for fast tracking with the three other projects that had requested consideration of the same status. Mr. Mahar seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

9. EPA Action Regarding the State Implementation Plan

Presenter: Eddie Dancausse, FHWA

Summary / FYI:

Mr. Dancausse provided the TCC with an update on the region's air quality conformity status. He reminded the committee that MUMPO decided not to update its LRTP by the May 2009 deadline until it could pass conformity because preliminary modeling/regional emissions analysis (REA) showed that MUMPO could not develop a conforming plan in 2009. Instead, it was decided that an updated LRTP would be adopted in early 2010. At the same time, MUMPO's regional partners (Gaston MPO and Cabarrus-Rowan MPO) continued with their LRTP update processes. At this time, the Metrolina Area and NCDOT are currently exploring different options to see how the region might pass the REA. This could include modifying MPO project lists and other approaches. Mr. Dancausse then discussed the implications of not adopting a conforming plan by the original deadline:

MUMPO will enter into a one year conformity lapse grace period (CLGP) on May 3, 2009

- o During the CLGP there can be no project amendments/additions of non-exempt projects

If the Metrolina area is not able to demonstrate conformity by May 3, 2010, MUMPO will enter into a conformity lapse

The use of Federal aid funds is stopped, which impacts design work, Right-of-Way acquisition, construction, permitting

Following this discussion, Mr. Dancausse updated the TCC on recent developments concerning the State Implementation Plan (SIP). He stated NCDAQ submitted the Metrolina Area Attainment Demonstration to EPA on June 15, 2007, but due to the Clean Air Interstate Rule (CAIR) lawsuit, the EPA was not able to take action on attainment demonstrations (i.e., the Metrolina Area SIP). EPA sent a letter to NCDAQ on November 17, 2008, asking that the North Carolina portion of the bi-state Charlotte nonattainment area seek a higher classification (from moderate to serious) or face SIP disapproval. Mr. Dancausse noted that the EPA's letter surprised everyone. In response, NCDAQ sent a letter to EPA on December 19, 2008 asking that the SIP submitted on June 15, 2007 be withdrawn so that the State may improve the demonstration and submit an updated SIP. EPA is supposed to provide a response to the NCDAQ letter by January 9, 2009. The potential EPA responses to NCDAQ's letter are:

Failure to submit finding

- NCDAQ has 24 months to submit a revised SIP to EPA that is deemed complete or the Metrolina Area enters into a conformity lapse
- Discretionary findings -impacts unknown

NCDAQ plans to submit a revised SIP to EPA by November 30, 2009.

10. Monroe Connector/Bypass Update

Presenter: Carl Gibilaro, PBS&J

Summary / FYI:

Mr. Gibilaro reported on the Monroe Connector/Bypass:

Portions of the DEIS are under review and the full document should be released soon.

The preferred alternative will be included in the DEIS.

The cost estimate is in the range of \$780-\$820 million.

Mr. Coxe asked about further refinement of traffic revenue work. Jennifer Harris replied that the NCTA is working with a consultant to refresh earlier work. The work should be complete by late first quarter/early second quarter of 2009.

11. Northwest Huntersville Transportation Study

Presenter: Bill Coxe, Huntersville

Summary / FYI:

Mr. Coxe updated the TCC on the project's status. He briefly reviewed the options under consideration and discussed a decision-making matrix developed by a member of the town's planning board. He stated that he hoped to bring this matter back to the TCC in the near future for a recommendation to the MPO.

12. Adjourn: The meeting was adjourned at 11:55 AM.